

*Repentance and Reconciliation with God
recommended and enforced:*

IN TWO

SERMONS,

PREACHED at the

PARISH-CHURCH

O F

St. Saviour, Southwark ;

On SUNDAY *February* the 1st. And
on FRIDAY the 6th, 1756. Being the Day
appointed, by his MAJESTY's Proclamation,
to be observed as a General FAST.

W I T H

A serious and affectionate ADDRESS to the In-
habitants of the said Parish.

By T. JONES, CHAPLAIN.

Acquaint now thyself with GOD and be at Peace, Job xxii. 21.

THE THIRD EDITION.

L O N D O N :

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Report and Researches into the
History of the

MEMOIRS

OF

ST. SEYMOUR, SOUTHWICK

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BY J. J. J.

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TO THE
Parishioners of St. Saviour,
SOUTHWARK.

My dearly beloved Brethren,

PERMIT me to address myself to you in the Bowels of Jesus Christ. Suffer me to recommend the following Sermons to your serious and attentive Perusal. — They were delivered on the most important Occasion that, perhaps, was ever known, and I am willing to hope, from the numerous Congregation (on the Fast-Day especially) that they have been made useful to some Souls. As the eternal God seems to be alarming a guilty World by his tremendous Judgments, it becomes every Minister of the Gospel to improve the awful Opportunity that now presents itself, by inviting Sinners to accept of Mercy at the Hands of our dear Redeemer.

This, I thought, was incumbent on *me*: and for this Reason I publish from the Press what I delivered from the Pulpit, with a sincere Desire, that they may be the Means of awakening some carnal Minds to an earnest Sollicitude about Soul-Concerns. God often works by the meanest Instruments, and, I trust, He will

speak even by me : but at the same Time that
 I desire to be made more extensively useful to
 Mankind, I am sensible I ought not to forget
 those, among whom the Providence of God
 has placed me. To you, therefore in parti-
 cular, I now address myself; for, of you, in
 particular, I must give an Account at God's tre-
 mendous Bar. Bear with me then, my Bre-
 thren, while I call upon you, in the Name of
 God, to attend to the Things which belong unto
 your eternal Peace. I must inform you, that
 unless you have an experimental Acquaintance
 with the Lord Jesus in your Souls, good would
 it have been for you had you never been born.
 — This is what I have often inculcated in al-
 most all my Discourses; and this, I am not to
 be informed, has given many of you great Of-
 fence. As many of you are prejudiced against
 me, merely for preaching Jesus Christ, and him
 crucified; it may not be improper to expostu-
 late with you on the Subject. Let me desire
 you would give a candid and impartial Hear-
 ing to what I have to say in my Defence: and
 may the Spirit of God remove all Prejudice,
 and enable you to determine agreeably to the
 Truth, as it is in Jesus.

I have thought it my Duty (as a Minister of
 the Church of *England*) to preach no other
 Doctrine among you than those of that Church.
 For this Reason I was determined, by the Grace
 of God, not to flatter, nor suffer you to slum-
 ber in your carnal Security, but constantly set
 before

before you the misery of Man in a State of Nature. I have endeavoured to convince you, that Man is a fallen Creature; that his Nature is depraved and corrupt; that no Works of his own can recommend him to the Love and Favour of God; that Man must come to God *as a Sinner*, and be justified by the free Grace of God in Jesus Christ, applied to his Soul by Faith only; that he cannot take a single Step in the divine Life without the Almighty Influence and Assistance of the blessed Spirit of God. I have, moreover, informed you, that unless you are made sensible of your miserable State by Nature, unless you experience the pardoning Love of God upon your Souls on this Side the Grave, *i. e.* unless you *are born again of the Spirit of God*, nothing can save you from the Damnation of Hell.

These are the Doctrines I preach; and by these Doctrines I have given many of you great Offence: but why? Are they not the Doctrines of the Gospel? Are they not the Doctrines of the Church of *England*? Too many of our Clergy know they are; and for that Reason, in their Disputes on these Points, they very artfully evade every Argument that is produced from her Authority. Several of them oppose these great and important Truths; the Doctrine of Justification by Jesus Christ alone, contradicts their Pride, and they oppose with all their Strength what they have solemnly engaged in the Presence of God to support and defend: The faithful Ministers of Jesus Christ are not affected

affected by what I now say, and therefore will not be offended. The others may think as they please; I have nothing to hope from their Esteem, and (blessed be God) I have nothing to fear from their Malice. I must therefore assert, and am ready to prove, that too many of our Clergy, by their impious Opposition to what they (I hope ignorantly) call the NEW DOCTRINE, are the avowed Enemies of the Church of *England*. I pray God they may see their Danger before it be too late, lest they find, hereafter, they have been fighting against God.

I speak not this out of any Disrespect to their Persons: God forbid! I am sorry at my Heart, to find they afford so great Occasion. I would not indeed have mentioned this, had there not been an absolute Necessity for it. Several of the Clergy endeavour to prejudice the Minds of our People against receiving the great Truths of the Gospel. It is therefore absolutely necessary that our People should be exhorted, no longer to trust such blind Guides.—Since these Things are so, let me advise you, my Brethren, to pin your Faith on no Man's Sleeve, but to search the Scriptures, and examine for yourselves. I do not desire you to rest on my Authority, no more than on that of others. I desire to stand or fall by the Oracles of God. By this Rule I am ready to be tried; if you will but attend to these sacred Pages with an humble Desire of Information, I am sensible you *must* agree to the Doctrines I advance. Another Favour I would
ask,

ask, and it is this; purchase the Homilies of our Church: they contain many excellent and Christian Truths, and highly deserve your serious Perusal. The Doctrines contained in these glorious Treatises, I, and every Clergyman have promised to preach and defend. To them I refer myself, and defy the bitterest Opposer of the Gospel to produce any Argument from them that can invalidate the Gospel of Christ, which *some Men* distinguish by the Name of a *NEW DOCTRINE*. But, my Brethren, it is no *new Doctrine*. It is the *old Doctrine* of the Gospel: it is the Doctrine of the primitive Fathers, and the Doctrine of the Church of *England*, as contained in her Articles, Homilies, and Liturgy. This being the Case, I leave you to judge to whom the Charge of Innovation properly belongs. I only desire a fair and impartial Examination. Be not imposed on by the Subtilty or the Malice of Men, but ask them, whether these very Doctrines are not the Doctrines of the Church of *England*? Only ask them the Question, and they must be blind indeed (or something worse) if they deny it. Let me intreat you, my Brethren, to judge for yourselves. Try every Thing by the Rule of God's Word. Abide by the Determination of your own Church, and I am content. Do not, however, put the Consideration of these Points from you; for, believe me, my dear Brethren, an Eternity depends upon it. Resolve then to look up to God for the Aid and Assistance of his Holy Spirit, beseech Him to
guide

guide you into all Truth. Think me not *your* Enemy because I tell you the Truth. You may be assured I would not willingly give you the least Offence. I can safely appeal to the great Searcher of Hearts, that my only Aim is to deliver my own Soul, and to deal out a Blessing unto you. I hope you will attend to what has been said, and see for yourselves whether these Things are so.

Nothing but a real Desire to minister to your Salvation has induced me to address you: for God knows *my Heart's Desire for you is, that you may be saved, though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved.* Now, Brethren, I commend you to God and to the Word of his Grace in Jesus Christ our Redeemer. This Grace, I hope, you will be experimentally acquainted with. I hope we shall shortly meet in those Regions of Bliss and Glory, where all Contentions shall cease, where all Animosity shall vanish, and where the Love of Jesus will be the only Subject of our Praise and Admiration. That you may be so united to Him here as thus to reign with Him hereafter, is the sincere and earnest Endeavour, seconded by the fervent and hearty Prayers of,

My dear Brethren,

Your Affectionate, tho' unworthy Minister,

Feb. 14, 1756.

T. JONES.



S E R M O N

O N

JAMES iv. 9, 10.

*Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your
Laughter be turned to Mourning, and your Joy
to Heaviness. Humble yourselves in the Sight
of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.*

THIS is the Advice the Apostle gives those
 T to whom he wrote this Epistle, in order
 to deprecate the Judgments of God that
 were hanging over their Heads. As the
 Cause of all signal and national Punishments is the
 Iniquity of Mankind, we are advised to humble our-
 selves under a just Sense of that Iniquity, that the
 Anger of the Lord may be turned away from us.
 He tells us in the first Verse of this Chapter, that
 Wars and Fightings, as well as all other grievous
 Calamities, proceed from those Lusts that war in
 our Members; and it certainly follows, that if we
 would be freed from the Effect, we must remove the
 Cause: and we are told in the Text, that the only
 B Way

Way to remove both Cause and Effect, is to humble ourselves before God, by way of Repentance, for the Cause, and by way of Deprecation of the Effect: in Consequence of this Humiliation we shall be lifted up from that deplorable State into which we have fallen, and shall be exalted to the Love and Favour of God: this is the Substance of the Text, — *Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your Laughter be turned to Mourning, and your Joy into Heaviness. Humble yourselves in the Sight of the Lord, and He shall lift you up.*

In my following Discourse, I propose, with the divine Assistance, to shew,

1st. The great Reason we all have thus to humble ourselves before Almighty God; — *be afflicted, and mourn, and weep.*

2dly. Wherein this Affliction and Humiliation may be said to consist; — *let your Laughter be turned into Mourning, and your Joy to Heaviness.*

3dly. The happy Effects of thus turning to God; — *humble yourselves in the Sight of the Lord, and He shall lift you up.* And may the good Spirit of God dispense his gracious Influences to every Soul here present, and give you the hearing Ear, and the understanding Heart, while I am endeavouring to shew the great Reason we all have thus to humble ourselves before Almighty God; — *be afflicted, and mourn, and weep.*

I design this Discourse to prepare myself and you, in the best Manner I am able, for a suitable Observance of the approaching Fast. This, I hope, will induce you to give a candid Hearing to what I have to offer upon the Subject before me.

Under

Under the first Head, that we may the more easily perceive the Reason we have to repent and turn to the Lord, we may consider ourselves as Members of Society, or as Individuals. And first, as Members of Society, as Parts of one Whole, and as interested and connected in one Frame or Body Politick. If we survey the Infidelity in Principle, and the Dissoluteness in Practice, of the People of this Land, we cannot but own that we have abundant Reason to implore the divine Mercy and Forgiveness. Our Guilt (as a People) rises in Proportion to the Blessings we receive at the Hand of Heaven. That this Nation has been peculiarly favoured with the Blessings of Providence is a real Fact; the Temperature of our Climate, and the Plenty which distinguish this Island, are too notorious to be denied. Add to this that remarkable Instance of God's Goodness in indulging us with so great a Plenty of the Gospel of Christ: we enjoy the Christian Religion in its primitive Purity, and can call upon our Redeemer in those Ways we see laid down in his holy Word. And this is another very eminent Advantage we of these Kingdoms enjoy. While many other Nations are obliged to depend on the Traditions of Men, while they are debarred the Use of the Scriptures, or at least have them put into their Hands, mangled and defaced by their crafty designing Teachers, it is our Privilege and Happiness to have free Access to the Fountain of Knowledge, the lively Oracles of God, which, by the Grace of his Holy Spirit, are able to make us wise unto Salvation; while our persecuted Brethren abroad are obliged to retire into Holes and Corners, that they may have an Opportunity of hearing the Word of God, and joining in religious Worship, we of this Nation are not only permitted the free Use and Exercise of Religious Duties, but are invited to call upon God, and attend upon his

holy Worship. What would the poor Protestants in *France* give for that Liberty and Indulgence we of this Nation are born to?

Again, While they are the Slaves of Tyrants, and the Dupes of Arbitrary Power, it is our Happiness to breathe a freer and a purer Air in the more mild Regions of Liberty and Plenty. Liberty is the Inheritance of the Natives of this Land, and the Government thereof is entirely calculated to preserve and support, not to undermine and destroy it.

From all these, and many more Particulars that might be mentioned, we may well conclude, that we are held under the strictest Ties of Gratitude to Almighty God (as a People) for the many spiritual Privileges and temporal Blessings He has showered down upon our Heads.—Let us now recollect what Return we have made our wise and good Benefactor for these great and signal Advantages we enjoy.

And, First, with regard to the Climate and the Plenty of every Necessary our Island produces; so far from being thankful (you will remember that I am now speaking of ourselves collectively as a People) so far from being thankful for these Gifts of Providence, that we are constantly murmuring and repining; the Commodities of our own Country are despised, and nothing but what is foreign will generally speaking) go down. Our own Manufactures, and the Artists concerned in them, are disregarded as useless and insignificant, while the most beggarly Trash, provided it comes from a foreign Land, is wished for and purchased at the dearest Rate. Our own Artificers (the Staple of *English* Wealth) are neglected, and a set of Things introduced in their room, whose only Merit consists in rendering it a matter of Difficulty to determine, whether they are Men or Monkeys: this is our Gratitude for the Gifts and Blessings of Providence. But as this is an Evil
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of a moral, at least of a political Nature, it does not come under my Inspection. I therefore only mention it, and pass on to those general Instances of Ingratitude, whereon it is more immediately my Province to descant and enlarge.

What Returns have we made our gracious God, for that free Use of his holy Word He has indulged us with? We have the lively Oracles of God in our Hands; *many Prophets and Kings have desired to see the Things which we see, and have not seen them, and to hear those Things which we hear, and have not heard them.* Now, do we (I mean as a People) prize this inestimable Jewel, these valuable Records? Do we esteem this Book of God, as a Pearl of great Price? And do we implore the Spirit of God to remove the Veil from our Hearts, that we may understand what we read? I fear (generally speaking) we do not. To what but to a Neglect of God's revealed Will, and a Contempt of the Offers of Grace which are daily made us, to what Causes but these can we possibly ascribe that general Infidelity which is the Characteristick of this Age? The Word of God is treated by Numbers with the greatest Contempt. That Word of Truth which, when understood, is able to make Men wise unto Salvation, is looked on by many as an old Wive's Fable. I am far from charging this upon the whole Nation: but that it is the prevailing Custom, with a great Number, is too plain to need a Proof.

Fashion takes the Lead in high Life more particularly. Our Men of Wit and Spirit scorn to be tied down to the same Rules with the Mean and Vulgar. They must gratify every sensual Appetite that rises in them; and therefore think it the most effectual Method to remove the Bible (that Bar to their Pleasures) by pronouncing it spurious, ridiculous, and the Contrivance of Priests.

Thus,

Thus, they reject the Word of God against themselves, and go on indulging every filthy Lust, despising the Commandments of JEHOVAH, and *needing none of his Reproofs.*

As this is the Character of many, so the practical Part of it will suit too many of those who profess a mighty Respect and Veneration for the Scriptures; for among the Number that join in confessing those Writings to be of divine Inspiration, how few are there that are really thankful for this precious Gift, and shew that Thankfulness by a diligent and constant Use of them? The Generality of us enhance our Guilt by owning the Scriptures to be of divine Authority, when, at the same Time, we pay no Regard to the loud and solemn Calls to Repentance given us therein; when we despise that Redeemer of whom they treat, and count his Blood, where-with alone we can be sanctified, an unholy or common Thing. We are as dissolute in our Lives, as indulgent to our Lusts, and as much kept under by their Power, as if there were no Restraints for them in the Bible. We are practical Infidels certainly. For, we are as regardless of Religion as if there were no Scriptures, as indifferent about eternal Happiness as if there were neither Heaven nor Hell, and as hardened in Sin as if there were no God.——while our foreign Brethren mourn their Loss of the Fountain of all Knowledge, we spurn it from us. We are like the disobedient *Jews*; we loath the Manna, and are surfeited with it; we hew to ourselves broken Cisterns; we have a Fountain of living Water to go to, and prefer the Bread of Idleness, of Wick- edness, Debauchery, and Impiety to that Bread which came down from Heaven.

Again, are we truly thankful for the glorious Privilege we of this Nation enjoy; I mean the full and free Use of our Religion? How do our suffering Bre-
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thren abroad long for the Opportunities we are so happy as to enjoy? How would they flock to hear the Word of eternal Life, and wait, and hang upon the Preacher's Lips? Whereas we (you remember I am not aiming at any particular Person, but speaking of ourselves as a People) are cold and indifferent, lifeless and inactive. Many of us neglect assembling ourselves together; and others, when they repair to the Temple of God, are so remiss, so unconcerned while they are there, as if eternal Salvation were a Matter of Indifference. Others, again, make a Merit of their Attendance, and of their weak Performances; and a great Part reject the Merits of a crucified Saviour with Scorn.

This is but a faint Sketch of the Infidelity and Profaneness now prevailing. You will all, I believe, very readily allow, that this Age and Nation are now wicked to a Proverb. Infidelity has tainted the Principles, Vice and Wickedness are become the Practice of the Generality of the People of this Land. This then surely calls upon us to humble ourselves before God; since Practices of this Nature will most assuredly draw down the divine Vengeance. Nations and Kingdoms, as such, must be punished in this World, because hereafter all those Relations and Dependencies, whereby one Member of Society is connected with the rest, will then cease, and be no more. Rewards or Punishments will be dispensed hereafter to Men, as Individuals, according as they have embraced or rejected the Gospel of Jesus Christ. But all Bodies and Societies of Men must be punished, considered in a collective Capacity, in this World. As this is necessary from the Nature of Things, so this has been the constant Method of God's Dealings with Mankind. Whenever a Nation or People have filled up the Measure of their Iniquity, God fails not to vindicate his injured Honour upon them,

them, and to warn others by their Example. These have been his Dealings with the great Empires and Monarchies we read of in History, which are now no more. This was the Method He took with his own peculiar People, and this is what we of this Land have all the Reason in the World to expect.

I need make no Scruple to assert, that this Nation has well nigh filled up the Measure of its Iniquities, and we have all the Reason in the World to humble ourselves before God, in order to avert those heavy Judgments our manifold Sins have deserved. Especially when we recollect we have had Warning given us, and that the Judgments of the great and terrible God are now abroad in the Earth.

The late dreadful Calamities that have happened to other Lands, call to us in more than the Loudness of Thunder, Awake thou sleeping Land of *Britain*, and call upon thy God, that thy whole People perish not.—And this points out to us another Advantage we enjoy, and another Instance of our Ingratitude. The Advantage is God's mercifully sparing us hitherto, while he is chastising the rest of the Earth. Our Sins cry as loud, perhaps louder, for Vengeance than theirs, who have (many of them) been cut off in the midst of their Sins. Hitherto God has waited to be gracious. We have had some slight Experience of the Shocks that have been lately disturbing the whole Globe, but hitherto remain in Safety. Our Ingratitude (as a People) is very evident, since we are not (or or at least do not shew that we are) thankful for the Goodness and Forbearance of God. How are we affected by the late Earthquakes? Have they awakened any of us? Have they induced us to turn unto God? Or are we a whit the more serious than before? General Observation confirms that we are not. Those who call
them

them Judgments of God are ridiculed. Natural Causes are sought out to account for them, though (by the way) no natural Cause has nor can be assigned for the late unparalleled Shock the whole Globe has felt, except that great natural Cause Sin and Wickedness. Sin is the Cause of Earthquakes, and therefore we of this Land have great Cause to tremble. But the late dreadful Events are almost forgotten and out of Mind: the Most High hath uttered his Voice, yet none considereth nor layeth it to Heart. We are (I am generally speaking) like a Set of Gentlemen who lately came from *Lisbon*; and who, one would imagine, must have had the most awful Impressions made upon their Minds. These persons landed at *Falmouth* just as the Bell was ringing for Prayers, and it was naturally expected they would have embraced the first Opportunity of returning Thanks to God for their late happy Escape: but instead of this, they went to a Tavern, sent for Whores, and a couple of Fiddlers, and spent their Night in Riot and Debauchery. This I had from undoubted Authority.

We see by this how little these Men were affected by the Hand of God, which was so lately upon them. As little affected are we. Few (if any) Awakenings have been heard of among us in Consequence of it: we are quite hardened in Sin, even to a Degree of Stupidity. Public Diversions, those Instruments in the Devil's Hand, where no real Disciple of Jesus Christ will dare be present; those Places are constantly frequented, and the Worship of God slighted and neglected; and *shall I not visit for these Things, saith the LORD?* As we are unmoved at what has befallen others, we have all the Reason in the World to believe that our Destruction lingereth not, but that some heavy Punishment hangs over our Heads.

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In what Way or Manner God may be pleased to chastise this guilty Land, He only knows.

If we are not swallowed up by an Earthquake, (and why may not the Earth open her Mouth this Moment upon us? It is no more than what has happened to others) I say, if we are not swallowed up, &c. yet we may remember the Lord's Hand is not shortened; that He has various Judgments whereby to execute his Vengeance upon a guilty Land. We are in all Probability on the Eve of the bloodiest War that *England* ever knew! Who knows but we may fall by the Sword? that the Winds and the Waves may be made to fight against us, and we be delivered up into the Hands of our Popish Enemies? And in such a Case the Consequences are well known. However in what manner soever the Lord shall be pleased to avenge himself upon us, some Punishment we have the greatest Reason to expect. Certainly then it will highly become us to humble ourselves before God, to confess our Sins and Provocations against Him, and to implore his Mercy for his dear Son's Sake, Jesus Christ our Lord. As it is thus necessary for us to deprecate the divine Displeasure (as a People) it is equally so as we are Individuals. Every one of us, in our private Capacity, has abundant Reason to humble himself before God; for besides those heavy Judgments, which now surround us, besides the many Tokens of God's Displeasure which are now abroad in the Earth, there is one Judgment-Seat where we must all appear; and unless we are reconciled to God by Faith in Jesus Christ, while we live, nothing can save us from everlasting Destruction.

This is certain; and therefore every Soul here present that has never seen its Corruption by Nature, its Enmity to God, and its State of Pollution,

tion, and Guilt; every Soul that is not brought home to God by the Blood of Christ, is in Danger of eternal Destruction. And surely every one that is in Danger of eternal Misery has abundant Reason to humble himself before God, and implore his Mercy.

I shall not enlarge on this Subject at present, because a convenient Opportunity will be afforded me on the Fast-Day. I would only observe at present, that the best of us must own ourselves to be vile and miserable Sinners; that we are under the Power of Sin, and are held Captives by our Lusts and evil Inclinations. Therefore, whoever thou art, O Man, whoever thou art, O Woman, that art in thy natural State (Conscience do thine Office while I am speaking, and convince the Sinner of his Vileness and Wretchedness) whoever thou art, that are not prepared if God should call thee this Moment, humble thyself before Him, and beg Him to be reconciled unto thee for the Sake of thy blessed Redeemer. Indeed thou hast abundant Reason. For while thou art in a State of Nature, thou art in a State of Enmity against God; and how dreadful must his Situation be who has the eternal JEHOVAH for his Foe?

I hope, by this Time, I have convinced you what abundant Reason we all have thus to humble ourselves before God; — *be afflicted, and mourn, and weep.*

I am to shew in the Second Place, wherein this Humiliation consists: — *let your Laughter be turned to Heaviness, and your Joy to Mourning.*

Now, this Humiliation consists in a real and unfeigned Sorrow for our Sins and Offences, and in earnest Prayer and Supplication to God for Mercy: if we are really convinced of our Misery by Nature,

if we are really sensible how grossly we have offended our holy God by actual Transgression, we shall be afflicted for so doing: we shall mourn over our unhappy state, we shall weep before Him and entreat his Forgiveness. This Humility consists in real Self-Abasement: in being divested of every proud Thought, and every arrogant Conceit of ourselves: in laying low before the Throne of God, owning our Vileness, acknowledging ourselves to be less than the least of all his Mercies. If we are truly humbled, we shall not rest till Peace is spoken to us from God: we shall be alarmed at our Danger, and groan earnestly for Deliverance. — *our Laughter will be turned into Mourning*; all that profane Wit and Ridicule of holy Things we before allowed ourselves in, will now cut us to the Heart. And we shall mourn over our Ingratitude and Rebellion to our blessed Redeemer: all that Mirth and Gaity we before delighted in, will now appear flat and insipid; none but the crucified Jesus can now speak Comfort to us, and the Language of our Souls will be,

None but Christ to me be given,
None but Christ in Earth or Heaven.

The Fast which the Lord will chuse, is a real Sorrow of the Heart, expressing itself in the outward Acts of Mortification and Self-denial, and, indeed, that Soul that is in Anguish for Sin, will naturally mortify the Body, and bring it into Subjection.

Again, true Sorrow for Sin will be attended with a Desire, at least to forsake it. If we fall, it will be really grievous, and Matter of Affliction to us. — It is not outward Form and Ceremony; it is not praying

praying with our Lips will reconcile us to God, unless our hearts accompany our Tongues, and cry for Mercy. You then who purpose to observe the approaching Fast, will do well to remember, that your bare Presence here will be of no avail. Your joining in the outward Form, and making a mere Shew of Humility, will only increase your Guilt, unless ye desire your Hearts should be afflicted. Beg of God to prepare you to humble yourselves before Him, by setting home his Law on your Consciences, by convincing you of your Sinfulness and Danger, and by giving you a true Humility and Sorrow of Heart: *then shall ye cry, and the Lord shall answer: then shall ye call unto Him, and he will say, Behold, here I am.* And this brings us in the last Place to consider, the happy Effects of thus turning to God: — *Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord and he shall lift you up.*

Humility is the Gate of Honour: whosoever humbleth himself shall be exalted. He that is convinced of his own Weakness and Inability, and cries to the Lord Jesus for Mercy, shall certainly find Acceptance: he is thus wounded in order to be healed: the Lord delighteth to save the humble Soul, and to relieve those that are of a contrite Heart: those that are humbled under a Sense of Sin, the Lord will lift up to Grace here, and Glory hereafter. Beg of God, my Brethren, to give you a true and hearty Repentance. Beseech him to prepare your Hearts against the approaching Solemnity, and I can promise you, in my Master's Name, that if you are really afflicted, and call upon Him from the Bottom of your Hearts, ye *shall* find Rest and Peace unto your Souls. Beseech him at the same Time to enlarge your Hearts and Affections, that ye may remember your Countrymen as well as yourselves

yourselfes: and beg of Him to be merciful, and spare this guilty Land. I invite you in the Name of God to humble yourselfes: — *be afflicted, and mourn, and weep, &c.*

I shall make no farther Application; but shall reserve it to the Day itself. I only inform you that I intend, God willing, to preach here twice on the approaching Fast: many Servants, and others, cannot attend in the Beginning of the Day: they will therefore have an Opportunity of attending in the Afternoon: and I hope you will send your Servants and Dependents, that they may join in this Act of Humiliation, all Orders and Degrees of Men are threatened by the late dreadful Calamities; therefore all Orders and Degrees of Men ought to humble themselves before God. As the Judgments around us have been very extraordinary, I hope our Humiliation will be extraordinary likewise.

May God prepare us all, according to the Preparation of the Sanctuary, and may it prove such a Fast as he hath chosen.



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S E R M O N

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MATTHEW V. 25, 26.

Agree with thine Adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the Way with him, lest at any Time the Adversary deliver thee to the Judge, and the Judge deliver thee to the Officer, and thou be cast into Prison. Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no Means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost Farthing.

 Hope, my Brethren, we have all offered up our Prayers to God with Earnestness and Sincerity; and that we have desired at least, to humble ourselves before Him, I trust many a fervent Ejaculation has reached the Throne of Grace. I trust there have been many wrestling *Jacobs* to-day, God grant they may prove prevailing *Israels*! As you have addressed your Redeemer in Prayer, I hope you are disposed to give
a can-

a candid and diligent Attention to what I have to offer from those Words of His I have just now read to you. They are part of the most divine Sermon that was ever delivered: they were spoken by the greatest Preacher that ever appeared on Earth: they are the Words of our blessed Redeemer Himself; which, when rightly understood, He has elsewhere told us, *are Spirit and Life*. God grant they may be Spirit and Life both to you and me.

In this Sermon He opens and explains the Spirituality of the Law; assures us that a just God will by no means accept of a partial Obedience, and that nothing short of a perfect service will be pleasing to a perfect God.

If we attend to the Strictness and Spirituality of the Law (as explained by our Lord) we cannot but see how grossly we have violated it; and that no Man living (the Man Christ Jesus excepted) was ever able to perform it; for, according to this Explanation, the Most High God *requireth Truth in the inward Parts*: his Law extends to our inmost Thoughts, and justly condemns the least Irregularity of them. This being the Case, we cannot but own the Necessity of our being cloathed with a better Righteousness than our own, if ever we would be Partakers of the Kingdom of Heaven. To induce us to apply for this Royal Robe is our Lord's Design in the Words of the Text: for after having proved us all guilty before God (which He has done, by giving us the spiritual Meaning of it, and proposing it with such Rigour, and requiring an Observance of it to such a Degree of Exactness, as I am sure no Man ever arrived at :) I say, having proved us all guilty before God of a Violation of his Law, He then advises us what we are to do, in the Words of the Text,

Agree

Agree with thine Adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the Way with him, lest at any Time the Adversary deliver thee to the Judge, and the Judge deliver thee to the Officer, and thou be cast into Prison, Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no Means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost Farthing.

In discoursing farther on which Words, I propose (God willing) to observe the following Method.

1st. I shall endeavour to shew you who is meant by the *Adversary* here spoken of: — *agree with thine ADVERSARY.*

2dly. In what Manner, and at what Time, we are to agree with him: — *agree with thine Adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the Way with Him.*

3dly. Who is meant by the Judge: — *lest at any Time the Adversary deliver thee to the JUDGE.* And

4thly. I shall inform you who the Officer is, here spoken of, and the Consequence of being given into his Power: — *and the Judge deliver thee to the OFFICER, and thou be cast into Prison. Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no Means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost Farthing.*

Each of which I shall endeavour to apply as I go along: and may the good Spirit of God breath into all our Souls the true Breath of Life, and enable you to look up to Him for a Blessing, while I endeavour, in the first Place, to shew you who is meant by the *Adversary* here spoken of: — *agree with thine ADVERSARY.*

D

Now,

Now, this Adversary is the eternal God. Every Man, by Nature, is an Enemy to Him. We read in Scripture, that *God is of purer Eyes than to behold Evil*, that *no Evil dwells with Him*, and that *without Holiness no Man shall see Him*. Now we are evil from the Womb, God Himself hath declared, that *the Thoughts of Man's Heart are only Evil continually*. The sacred Writings inform us, that *we are all gone out of the Way*; that *we are altogether become abominable*; that *there is none righteous, no not one*: consequently without agreeing with this Adversary, we shall never enjoy his heavenly Bliss. We brought this Enmity to God into the World with us; for *we are all, by Nature, born in Sin*: our Natures are corrupted, and we have no Power of ourselves to serve and please God. As the Scriptures assure us of this, our Hearts (if we examine them) will convince us of it. We may have indeed some specious Qualities in our Dispositions that may appear amiable in the Eyes of Men like ourselves, but in the Sight of infinite Purity, we sink into nothing, and are corrupt before Him. Every one of us is in this Situation by Nature, and nothing but an Almighty Arm can raise us out of it. The first Man indeed was created in the Image of God; but that Image was defaced by his Fall: in the Day he eat of the forbidden Fruit he died to God; he died to the divine Life; he died to all spiritual Grace and Power. This spiritual Death he entailed on his Posterity. We partake of his evil Nature, and are dead to God. We have no natural Ability to turn to him: *we are all by Nature the Children of Wrath: we are dead in Trespasses and Sins.* To what but original Corruption can we possibly ascribe that Coldness and Inattention to spiritual Things, that Aversion

Aversion to God and Goodness, which every one of us must perceive to be more or less in all our Hearts? Hence the diseased Persons we read of in the Gospel are Emblems of the spiritual Maladies of our Souls. In the Man that was born blind, we have an Image of our spiritual Blindness by Nature: the Eyes of our Minds are shut against the Light of the Gospel: the Situation of such is represented by the Apostle as that of Men *having the Understanding darkened*: the Leper full of Spots and Blemishes was an exact Picture of the Leprosy of Sin, with which our Souls by Nature are infected, and all their bodily Defects are so many Images of our Depravity and Corruption.

Now, against all this Sin and Pollution, the eternal God is a declared Enemy: it cannot consist with the Purity of the divine Essence to have any Communion with Persons in this State; but in this State is every Man by Nature, and therefore to every Man, by Nature, *God out of Christ is a consuming Fire*. As we are Enemies to God by our natural Defilement, we have also made Him our Adversary by actual Transgression. We have been ungrateful to this our best Benefactor; *we provoke Him every Day; we have committed Iniquity with Greediness, and have rushed into Sin, like the Horse into the Battle*: the bold Defiance of his Laws, the open Breach of his Commands, the Contempt of his Gospel, the profaning his holy Name, in short, the many Acts of Impiety, Intemperance, Lasciviousness, and Injustice, now prevailing, loudly proclaim this awful Truth; and although some Persons may have been preserved from enormous and grievous Sins, yet we have all of us the Seeds of them in our Hearts; and nothing but the divine Interposition prevents their

sprounting into Action. A Sense of this made an exemplary Christian* say (when he heard of a Criminal who was carrying to Execution for some flagrant Act) "There goes my wicked Self. I have the same Root of Bitterness in my deceitful Heart; and it has been owing to the restraining Grace of God alone, that I have been preserved from falling into the same Sin." But in many Things the best of us offend often; nor, till our Natures are renewed by the Spirit of God, can it possibly be otherwise! While the Fountain is defiled, the Streams that flow from it cannot be clear and untainted.

Some think that God is not their Adversary, because they perform some outward Ceremonies; but alas, all outward Duties, unless they proceed from an inward Principle of Love to God, are only so many *splendida Peccata* (as St. *Austin* terms them) glittering Vices, which can never abide the Test of infinite Justice. Men may skin over the Wound Sin has made in their Souls, by these outward Duties, but the Blood of Christ alone, applied by Faith, can effectually heal it.

Such as imagine God is not their Adversary because they pay a Regard to certain moral Duties, and perform some religious Ceremonies, I would ask, do you render an entire Obedience to the Law of God? The Law of God is holy, just, and good; and he requires an exact Conformity to it, in Thought, Word, and Deed. A perfect God will have a perfect Service: this you must allow: the Thing speaks for itself. If you have done this indeed, God is not your Adversary; you have no Need of a Redeemer. But if you have deviated ever so little from the Path of God's Commandments (even in Thought) your Works will profit you

* The holy Martyr *Bradford*.

you nothing; and then every one of us are become guilty before God.

Thus the Apostle argues; *I had not known Sin but by the Law*: before his Conversion he thought himself a very good Man: because he was strict in the Observance of the outward Part of it, and little thought he was a lost Sinner. But when he saw the spiritual Meaning of the Law, when he perceived, that nothing short of an universal Obedience to it would be admitted by infinite Justice, he then saw he had by no Means performed it: he then knew Sin reigned in his Members.

Again, he saith, *When the Commandment came, Sin revived, and I died*; when I perceived how rigorous the Commandment was, the Consciousness of Sin revived in my Soul, and I found myself to be dead in Trespases and Sins; and in this spiritual Deadness he must have remained, had not the Lord Jesus proclaimed a Pardon to his Soul.

The Substance of the first Head then is this: the eternal God is made our Adversary by original Sin and actual Transgression. Every Man by Nature is at Enmity with God. I would therefore ask every Soul in this Congregation (and may the eternal God enable you to answer aright) Are you in a State of Nature, or are you not? Have you felt the Weight of Sin, and are you sincerely desirous to be freed from it by the Blood of Jesus Christ? If so, the Spirit of God is at work upon your Hearts: the Lord is bringing you out of your natural Darkness into his marvellous Light. If not, if you have never seen the Evil of Sin, if you have never mourned over the Corruption of your Hearts, but on the contrary are thoughtless of Eternity, indifferent about Salvation, and unconcerned about your Souls, you are in a State of Nature: nay, though you may perform

form the outward Duties of Religion, and appear very exemplary in the Sight of Men, yet if your Hearts are unrenewed by the Spirit of God, you are still in a State of Nature; you are no better than painted Sepulchres, which appear beautiful outward, but within are full of Corruption and Uncleaness. Your inward Man is corrupted, and defiled with Sin, however specious your outward Deportment may be. Hear this, ye natural Men, and tremble; for, whoever you are, the eternal God is your Adversary. Think my Brethren, how powerful an Enemy you have to deal with: no Wealth can bribe, no Subtlety can deceive, no Strength can overcome Him. Remember, while you are at Enmity with God, that all Nature is at Enmity with you: you are under the Curse of God: your Wealth is often a Curse, since it is too frequently the Means of hardening you in your Sins, and drawing you off from God: and unless you are reconciled to Him, the forest of his Vengeance will light upon you: and if He should be pleased to make bare his Arm upon this guilty Land (as He has done on other Countries) to whom, to whom, my Brethren, can you apply for Shelter? What must be your Grief, How great your Horror of Soul when you recollect, that these Judgments are the Instruments of that Being whom you have wantonly made your Foe? That they are sent to hurry you into the Regions of Despair?

I fear too many of you, my Brethren, however you may flatter yourselves, I fear too many of you are in this dreadful Situation, *viz.* in a State of Enmity with the Lord of Hosts. Good God, how can you be easy! How can you enjoy one Moment's Peace, while this tremendous Being is unappeased? How can you venture to close your Eyes to Sleep, when you know not but you may open them in everlasting

lasting Burnings? My dear unhappy Brethren you are under the Curse of Almighty God. And can you then be safe? Can you evade his Anger? Can you resist Omnipotence? O no; the Nations of the World, compared to Him, are no more than a *Drop of the Bucket*. This may be an unpleasing Truth, but Truth it is; and unless your Hearts are renewed by God's Holy Spirit (if God be true) He is to you a consuming Fire.

Be not offended, my Brethren, because I tell you the Truth: what would you think of that Centinel, who should neglect to give Notice of the Enemy's Approach? The severest Punishment would be his Due; and the same should I deserve, if I neglected to tell you of your Danger; especially on such a Day as this, which is set apart for a Day of solemn Humiliation: and what Means so likely to cause you to humble yourselves before God, as by convincing you of the Danger you are in? What Season so proper as the present, when we have all the Reason in the World to expect some signal Instances of the divine Displeasure? However, all I can say is but a dead Letter, unless the Spirit of God be pleased to animate it, and carry it home to your Hearts. May He therefore open the Eyes of your Minds, that you may see your Danger. May He dispose your Hearts to apply to the Means of Reconciliation with your Almighty Foe, while I endeavour, in the second Place, to shew in what Manner, and at what Time, we are to agree with Him: *Agree with thine Adversary quickly whiles thou art in the Way with Him.*

Now some People think of agreeing with this Adversary by the Practice of Morality; which, however useful and amiable in its proper Place, can by no Means answer the End designed; for, as I ob-

served

served before, as long as the Heart is a polluted Fountain, the Streams that flow from it must necessarily be impure also. If we believe the Scriptures, there is only one Method of Reconciliation with GOD : *There is no Name under Heaven given among Men whereby we can be saved, but only the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ.* Repentance, and Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, are the Means of the Sinner's Reconciliation with GOD. By bidding us agree with our Adversary then, our Lord exhorts us to repent of our Sins, and to believe in Him. By Nature we are sinful and polluted, and have made the Eternal GOD our Adversary; and this is the Method the Spirit of GOD observes in reconciling the Sinner to this Adversary. He first convinces him of Sin, by the Preaching of the Word, or some other Way that his infinite Wisdom is pleased to direct : The Sinner is by these Means awakened from the Lethargy in which he had been so long lull'd ; he sees his Wretchedness, he mourns over his Guilt, and *cries mightily unto God for Pardon and Deliverance* ; he now sees his utter Inability to help himself, and desires to rely on the Merits of the Lord Jesus Christ alone. He is thus wounded, in order that he may be healed. The same good Spirit, that has awakened him to a Sense of his Danger, enables him to see *his Help laid on one willing and mighty to save.* He is led to the Throne of Jesus, where he finds Rest and Peace spoken unto his Soul. He has the comfortable Sense that his Sins are pardoned, witnessed to his Soul by the Spirit of GOD. *The Spirit itself beareth Witness with his Spirit, that he is the Child of GOD.*

You, then, who desire to be reconciled, or to agree with your Adversary, have a Way opened for you. You, indeed, have forfeited all Title
to

to the Favour of God, by the Violation of his Law; but the blessed Jesus has made full Satisfaction to his Father's Wrath. He has obeyed the Law of God in every the most minute Particular; and, by Virtue of his perfect Obedience, shall you be accepted. I now invite you to agree with your Adversary, by turning from Sin, and believing in the Name of Jesus Christ, be humbled under a Sense of your own Unworthiness, and look up by Faith, to the Lord Jesus Christ; or rather beg of God to give you his Holy Spirit, that you may be made acquainted with your own Hearts, and desire to be experimentally acquainted with the Lord Jesus Christ by Faith. It is not enough that ye look on Him as a Redeemer in general, unless ye can know Him to be indeed *your* Saviour; that He died to expiate *your* Sins, and to bring Pardon and Peace to *your* Souls. But this is the Gift of God. It is not in Man to turn himself to God. Implore, then, his Holy Spirit to lead you into all Truth, that ye may know what the Will of the Lord is. If you turn to God with your whole Hearts, you shall be justified from all your Sins by Faith which is in Him. His Death shall be thy Sacrifice, O Sinner, and his Obedience shall be thy Righteousness. Thou shalt be looked on as perfect in Christ thine Head. *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.* If you ask how you shall be able to know when you have true saving Faith in your Redeemer, I answer, your Faith is then genuine when it enables you to see your Sins pardoned, and is withal a vital Principle of Holiness within you, reforming your Life, and teaching you to practise the Duties of the Gospel. Defer not then, O Sinner! this important Work: set about it To-day; for the Night cometh wherein no Man can work.—And this leads us to examine at what Time

we are to agree with our Adversary: *Agree with thine Adversary* quickly, WHILES THOU ART IN THE WAY *with Him*. There is no Time to be lost; this Moment you can hardly call your own; let me exhort you therefore, quickly to be reconciled to your offended God. Sinner, whoever thou art, (and by the Term Sinner I mean all those that have experienced nothing of the Grace of God upon their Hearts) Sinner, whoever thou art, the Almighty God is thine Adversary, *Agree with him therefore quickly*: lose no Time, but embrace the Opportunity *whiles thou art in the Way with Him*. Now thou art in the Way with him, because thou art on this Side Eternity: Now is thy Time to call on Him. Thou hast seen Numbers fall beside thee, but as yet thou art spared. Remember a few Days will put a Period to thy Life, and then thou art fixed for ever. When once the Curtain of Life shall be dropped, then thy Doom will be unalterably fixed. Now Mercy may be had: now the Lord Jesus Christ waits to be gracious unto thee; He invites thee to be reconciled unto Him here, that thou may'st reign with Him for ever. When thou comest to lie on thy Death-bed, thou wilt see the Truth of what I am advancing; but then, perhaps, it may be too late. Behold, now is the accepted Time; now is the Day of Salvation. Again,—Thou art at present in the Way with God in the Course of his Judgments; Thousands have fallen Victims to his Wrath, but thou art spared. But how knowest thou, O Man! but his Judgments are hastening towards *thee*? And art thou ready, supposing God should call upon thee by some alarming Judgment? If thou art not, resolve to give no Sleep to thine Eyes, nor suffer the Temples of thy Head to take any Rest, 'till thou hast made a Friend of this incensed God. I hope it is with this Desire we are

all

all assembled here this Day! O wrestle with Him then, by Prayer, intreat him to cast thy Sins behind his Back, and to wash thy polluted Soul in the Blood of Jesus. The Inhabitants of *Lisbon* as little expected their Ruin and Desolation, and were as little prepared for it as thou art: and yet, secure and unconcerned as they were, the Lord of Hosts made bare his Arm upon them, and brought upon them swift Destruction. Nor indulge any uncharitable Reflection, upon that unhappy People: Think not their Sins greater than thine; (they had not the Word of God as you have) but remember the Words of our Redeemer in this Day's Gospel, *except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish*. Insult not over their Misfortunes, but be wise by their Example. Remember their Distress might have been, and may soon be yours. Be not therefore high-minded but fear, lest the same God that spared not them, spare not thee. Perhaps the approaching War may prove our Desolation: Who knows but God (unless we sincerely turn to him) may suffer our Popish Enemies to triumph over us? Then we shall know the Blessing of the Protestant Religion, by the Want of it: then we may learn to prize that Word of God we now despise, when we shall be debarred the Use of it.

Again, thou art *in the Way* with thine Adversary, O Sinner, at this present Time: *Thou art in the Way with him* in his Word. The Eternal Lord of Angels and Men is now in the Midst of this Congregation; He now sees the inmost Thoughts of every Heart before Him: He sees whether you have offered up your Prayers unto Him with Sincerity or not. He sees whether *ye fast for Strife and Debate*, whether ye are only formal in devotional Duties, or whether your Hearts are truly humbled. The great God of

Heaven and Earth sees whether you are attending on his Word with an humble Desire of Information, or whether you are secretly opposing and rejecting it. Be humbled then, my Brethren, in the Presence of that Being, *before whom the Angels are not pure in his Sight*. This God is now inviting you, by me, to turn, and live: The Lord Jesus Christ invites you, by the Worm that now addresses you, to come unto Him, that you may have Life. The dying Jesus calls to you from his Cross, not to make his Wounds wider by your Ingratitude and Impiety. Sinner, what art thou doing? thrust not thy unhallowed Hands into his precious Side: He has suffered enough already. See the purple Gore streaming from his Side, but do not trample upon it, do not join the Chief Priests in deriding Him, but be reconcil'd unto Him: pity thine agonizing bleeding God: hear him calling unto you, *Is it nothing unto you, all ye that pass by? behold, and see if there be any Sorrow like unto my Sorrow*. Now this Saviour waits to be gracious; He pities thee, O Sinner; He feels more for *thee* than for Himself; He wants to embrace thee: return then, whoever thou art, that hast been ungrateful to Him; serve his Enemies no longer: I challenge thee for my God, my blessed Master wants to cleanse thy polluted Soul, and to cloath thee with the Robe of his own Righteousness. I have spoken to your Ears, may the Lord Jesus Christ speak unto all your Hearts; for unless ye obey the Call of Mercy now ye must expect to hear the Voice of Judgment hereafter; for unless thou agreeest with thine Adversary, my Brother, thou wilt be assigned over to a just Judge.—And this brings me to shew in the third Place, who is meant by the Judge, *lest at any Time the Adversary deliver thee to th: Judge*. This

Judge

Judge is the Lord Jesus Christ Himself: He is appointed to be the Judge of Quick and Dead. *God hath appointed a Day in the which will He judge the World by that Man whom he hath ordained, the Man Christ Jesus.* Before his Tribunal we must all appear: *the Father hath committed all Judgment to the Son.* That same Jesus who came into the World, attended by a few poor Fishermen, will then appear with Legions of Angels, and Archangels, and all the celestial Hosts. He who had not where to lay his Head, will then have the Kingdom of Heaven at his Disposal, *to give to whomsoever he will.* He who came meek and lowly into *Jerusalem*, riding on an Ass, will then appear in tremendous Majesty, riding on the Clouds of Heaven. His Crown of Thorns will be exchanged for a Crown of Glory; and He will display all the Majesty and Fulness of the Godhead. That Redeemer thou now rejectest with Scorn, will then, O Sinner, be thine angry Judge. Be not, therefore, secure and easy; for although thou may'st escape a temporal punishment, die thou must: die thou must, and appear at the Judgment Seat of Christ: then every Thought of thine Heart will be disclosed; all the Pains thou hast taken to hide thy Wickedness and Deceit from Man will then be too slender a Covering. Offended Justice will then throw it open, and thou shalt be exposed and confounded before Men and Angels. Now thou art invited to come to Jesus Christ as a merciful Saviour; but if thou wilt not hear, if thou art resolved to harden thy Heart, remember, God will most assuredly bring thee to Judgment. Thy Redeemer then may justly say, Ungrateful Wretch, what canst thou plead in Excuse for thyself? Thou hast crucified me afresh; thou hast acted my Sufferings over again; thou hast refused the Offer of
Mercy;

Mercy ; now thou hast nothing to expect but the fiery Indignation of God, now thou shalt find the Wrath of an Almighty God not so trifling as thou hast thought it. Then will that same Jesus, who now pleads with his Father for Mercy for returning Sinners, then will He plead for Justice to his Adversaries : then will he deliver them to a most cruel Officer.—This leads us to consider, in the last Place, who the Officer is, that is here spoken of, and the Consequence of being delivered into his Power : — *and the Judge deliver thee to the OFFICER, and THOU BE CAST INTO PRISON. Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost Farthing.* This Officer is the Devil, the grand Enemy of Souls ; with whom hardened and impenitent Sinners shall be tormented for ever. He will be the Minister of God's eternal Vengeance. At the awful Tribunal of Christ, all *those whose Names shall not be found written in the Book of Life,* will then be delivered to this infernal Officer, who will cast them out into the Prison of Death and Hell : *Verily I say unto thee* (saith our Redeemer) *thou shalt by no Means come out thence till thou hast paid the uttermost Farthing ;* i. e. never. The Sinner shall never be freed from the Torments of Hell till he has satisfied the whole Law of God in every Particular, which will be impossible. If it cannot be done here, Hell is a very improper Place to begin it in. The Torments of the damned in Hell will last as long as Eternity itself. Some People indeed will not believe the Eternity of Hell-Torments ; but then they must not believe the Bible : if God be true, Hell-Torments will endure for ever : *Go ye cursed into Everlasting Fire,* saith our Saviour, *where the Worm dieth not, and the Fire is not quenched.* I allow it is the Interest of many to disbelieve

disbelieve this Truth; but they ought to remember, that the Decrees of God are not to be altered as their Fancies shall suggest. Men will not believe this, because they cannot reconcile it to themselves. I would ask them, how they can reconcile any one of the Attributes of God? They may remember, that, "a God all Mercy, is a God unjust." But supposing they may not be mistaken, that the Torments of the damned may have an End; 'act they not very absurdly in hazarding their Souls upon this Issue, because there is a bare Possibility that their Torments may have an End after an hundred thousand Years? Do not imagine, my Brethren, that it is in your Power to alter the Decrees of God: He has denounced Eternal Torments against all impenitent Sinners.—Let this then prevail with you to make the Lord Jesus Christ your Friend; for although you may escape here, yet if you die in your present State, Eternal Vengeance will be sure to overtake you: therefore, if you would avoid the horrid Company of the damned in Hell; if you would avoid the Company of the Devil and his Angels; if you would not be blaspheming the Name of Jesus with the infernal Crew; if you would not be banished the Presence of God, and be tormented for ever in Seas of liquid Fire, come humbly to the Lord Jesus Christ, and entreat him to be merciful unto you.

The Sum of what has been said is this, the eternal God is an Adversary to every Man in a State of Nature; and every Man that is *not born again of the Spirit of God*, is in a State of Nature; consequently in a State of Enmity with God. To this Adversary it is every Man's Interest to be reconciled, as he would avoid eternal Misery. The only Way to be thus reconciled, is to turn from Sin, and be united

united to the Lord Jesus Christ by Faith. This is the Work of the Spirit of God, whose Assistance I would intreat you to implore. Let me beseech you to call on the Lord Jesus *while he may be found*: for depend upon it, *if you refuse and rebel*, and die without the Knowledge of Jesus Christ in your Hearts, nothing can save you from the Damnation of Hell.—At the Day of Judgment God will not pity you, Jesus will not spare you, Hell and Satan will have full Dominion over you. This is what you must expect. Remember, Eternal Misery is the Consequence of refusing God's gracious Call; and if that Consideration will not move you nothing will.

My Brethren, your Souls, your precious Souls are at Stake; you hang by a very slender Thread over the Bottomless Pit. O call upon God while it is Time; harden not your Hearts against Him. Let what I have said have its due Weight. Do not steel your Breasts against what I have offered. Do not refuse a Blessing at my Hands: but come to the Lord Jesus Christ and be at Peace with him. Remember, it is not I, but the Lord Jesus Christ himself that speaks: *Agree with thine Adversary quickly, &c.*



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